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135

July 1, 1975
SC No. 00457/75

Approved For Release 2001/08/08 : CIA-RDP79T00865A001300030002-4
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Classified by 005827
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§ 5B (1), (2), and (3)
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on: Date Impossible to Determine

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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

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CONTENTS

July 1, 1975

The Way It Is: Suslov to the US Senators	1
Kardelj's Travels	3
Poland Eyes US Commercial Aircraft	4
	5

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The Way It Is: Suslov to the US Senators

The language was reasonably restrained, but the message was still clear: The US is not doing the USSR any favor in supporting detente; both countries must have it to survive in the modern world. The ideological doyen of the Kremlin, Mikhail Suslov, did not shrink from the task of telling the 14-man US senatorial contingent now in the USSR that, in effect, it is the USSR, not the US, which has reason to complain about the state of the relationship.

Suslov was uncommonly explicit, even repetitive, in arguing that the most important reason for the development of US-Soviet relations is to remove the danger of nuclear war. He did some lobbying on behalf of the Vladivostok agreements, telling the Senators that the agreements were "remarkable" because they provided for quantitative limitations on strategic weapons and the first steps to limit them qualitatively. He said the agreements were "particularly important" because they called for a continuous joint effort to limit arms. He made sure that the Senators understood that new talks on further limitations and possible reductions would begin "long before" the "now-prepared" (SALT II, presumably) agreement, which expires in 1985. Whether or not Suslov believes a SALT II agreement is literally "now-prepared," his implication that it is in the bag could be intended to get the Senators to exert pressure to resolve the remaining differences.

Picking up a refrain that has considerable currency in the Soviet media and in the statements of other leaders, Suslov said the arms race is continuing apace despite the restraints that are now on the books. He criticized the expanding US military

July 1, 1975

~~TOP SECRET UMBRA~~

~~TOP SECRET UMBRA~~

budget, and referred to a Soviet proposal for the reduction of military budgets to draw an invidious comparison between the USSR and the West on disarmament matters. He sharpened the point by stating explicitly that the relaxation of international tension cannot be consolidated without "consistent arms reduction."

On a more general point, Suslov repeated a theme expounded by Brezhnev in his election speech last month, saying the "impression is growing here" that the "enemies of detente" have stepped up their activities in the US. He rejected the notion of keeping score on who gains the most from detente and, like Brezhnev, scoffed at the idea that negative remarks about detente were sometimes made for domestic political reasons. The Soviets probably are genuinely concerned about the political strength of what they regard as anti-detente forces in the US, but Suslov's message seems to be that the US should not look to Moscow to make concessions to propitiate these forces of darkness.

Suslov was bound to say something about US-USSR trade, given his audience, but he left the subject for last and hewed closely to the standard Soviet line that trade benefits both sides and cannot be linked to the internal affairs of the USSR. He argued that the USSR could trade with other nations and would successfully develop its economy in any event. He pointed out, however, that the development of Soviet-US economic relations is an important element in improving political relations. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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July 1, 1975

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Kardelj's Travels

Edvard Kardelj, Yugoslavia's top theoretician, has completed visits to Hungary and Czechoslovakia and is currently in Romania for what appears to be more consultations on the next stage of preparations for the European Communist conference.

Kardelj has talked with the top party leaders of each country on a wide range of topics, including development of the Communist movement. He has probably reiterated Belgrade's insistence that the documents for the conference abstain from criticism of individual parties and avoid programmatic statements that would bind the parties to a given course of action. The working group that is drafting the conference documents was to reconvene yesterday in East Berlin.

Kardelj underwent a serious operation--some say for cancer of the colon--late last year. As recently as April, he was suffering considerable discomfort, and it is doubtful that he has fully recovered. The Yugoslav leadership apparently considered that his prestige as a theoretician was necessary for these delicate talks. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM/BACKGROUND USE ONLY)

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July 1, 1975

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Poland Eyes US Commercial Aircraft

Warsaw is considering purchases of US commercial aircraft for Poland's national airline, which is currently an exclusively Soviet-built fleet. McDonnell Douglas has offered two DC 9-50s; a Boeing proposal covers an unspecified number of 727s. France and the UK are also likely to enter the sales competition. French prospects could be helped by the favorable credits extended to Poland during President Giscard's visit in mid-June.

Any sale of Western aircraft to Poland would further undermine Soviet efforts to expand aviation exports and may spur similar interest from other East European countries, particularly Czechoslovakia and Hungary. In the past, the Soviets have had a near-monopoly on sales of civil aircraft to the Warsaw Pact countries. The East European airlines, however, have grown increasingly dissatisfied with their Soviet-built fleets because of shortages of spare parts, overhaul problems, and inefficient engines. Because of these problems, a US manufacturer was able to penetrate the market in the spring of 1973 when Romania purchased three Boeing 707s.

Poland needs additional medium-range jet aircraft to compete effectively on the lucrative routes between Warsaw and Western Europe. Although service on the Polish airline's 21,000-mile network is centered in Europe, it extends from the Middle East to the Western Hemisphere. Poland's current inventory includes 8 antiquated medium-range IL-18 turboprops, 10 TU-134 medium-range trijets, and 5 IL-72 long-range four-engine jets used on the Warsaw - New York service. (CONFIDENTIAL NO FOREIGN DISSEM)


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July 1, 1975

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Next 4 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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